

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Cuban revolutionary: 'Help fight to lift US embargo of Cuba'
— PAGE 7

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 79/NO. 43 NOVEMBER 30, 2015

Celebrations mark Cuba's role in defense of Angola

BY SETH GALINSKY

Forty years ago, revolutionary Cuba began "Operation Carlota," defending newly independent Angola from an invasion by the white-supremacist apartheid regime in South Africa.

The internationalist mission — Cuba's largest ever, lasting 16 years and involving 425,000 Cuban volunteers — changed the history of Africa, Cuba and the world. Its legacy haunts U.S. imperialism to this day.

At the request of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), Cuba in 1965 began providing instructors and training for the Angolan guerrillas, who were fighting for independence from Portuguese colonial rule.

"After the triumph of the 'Carnation Revolution' in Portugal [in April 1974], the country's entire colonial empire was dismantled," noted Cuban Gen. Álvaro López Miera in a Nov. 11 speech in Havana commemorating

Continued on page 7

Workers nationwide march for \$15 and a union

BY MAGGIE TROWE

Demonstrations for \$15 an hour, regular full-time schedules and a union took place all across the country Nov. 10, led by fast-food workers and attracting growing numbers of other low-wage workers.

Contingents of auto parts workers, UPS and Fedex drivers, nursing home workers and home health attendants, baggage handlers and cleaners employed through subcontractors by the airline giants, farmworkers, campus teaching assistants and retail workers took part. They are making gains, shedding fear of retaliation and building confidence.

Some 60 million workers in the U.S., 42 percent of all workers, earn less than \$15 an hour.

In more than 270 cities there were fast-food workers who didn't report to work and instead joined protests, said a press release by Fight for \$15. They were joined by contingents of union-

Continued on page 4

Paris, Washington use killings in France to push Mideast war

Step up attack on rights after Islamic State brutality



Sipa via Ap images

French fighter planes during November airstrike on Islamic State bases in Raqqa, Syria. U.S., French and Russian governments are using Islamic State terror attacks to escalate war moves.

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS AND JOHN STUDER

"France is at war," President Francois Hollande said to a rare joint session of the French Parliament at the Palace of Versailles Nov. 16. He spoke in response to the indiscriminate killings in Paris carried out three days earlier by agents of the reactionary Islamic State.

Hollande laid out a program of war measures in Syria; a call for Washington and Moscow to subordinate their political differences and join in leading a "grand" and "single coalition" against the Islamists; and for a series of attacks on political rights and the rights of Arabs and Muslims in France. He got a standing ovation from legislators of all political parties, who joined him in singing the national anthem.

Continued on page 6

Mine owners deny responsibility for destruction after dams burst in Brazil

BY EMMA JOHNSON

A vast area of the Brazilian state of Minas Gerais is covered in mud after two dams holding water and mineral waste from the Samarco iron ore mines burst Nov. 5. At least nine people are confirmed dead and another 19 missing, most likely buried in the sludge. As local communities fight to cope with the human and environmental disaster, mining giants BHP Billiton and Vale, co-owners of Samarco, deny any responsibility. Vale officials called it an "unfortunate and sad accident."

The disaster exacerbates the economic and political crisis in Brazil, where Latin America's biggest econ-

Continued on page 9

Socialist Workers Party demands Washington get troops, warplanes out of the Middle East!

The following statement is by Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Philadelphia in 2015.

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STATEMENT

Following the bloody carnage inflicted on some 500 people in Paris Nov. 13 by Islamic State terrorists, French President Francois Hollande called for expanded war in Syria and Iraq.

Beating of the war drums for more "boots on the ground" in the Middle East is growing in Washington, including in President Barack Obama's Democratic Party. More and more politicians and pundits are saying that U.S.-organized bombings, deployment of special forces units, and assassinations and drone attacks are not enough.

Continued on page 9

Over 1,000 striking unionists picket Kohler in Wisconsin



AP Photo/Greg Moore

Nov. 16 picket line at gates of Kohler Co. in Wisconsin. Workers rejected contract by more than 90 percent, demanding higher wages and end to divisive two-tier wage scale.

BY JOHN HAWKINS

KOHLER, Wis. — More than 1,000 striking members of United Auto Workers Local 833 and supporters marched from the union hall in Sheboygan to picket the headquarters of Kohler Co. in this company town Nov. 16. The previous day they had voted down the company's contract proposal. They spilled out into an intersection in Kohler, a town of 2,100, at one point backing up traffic for more than a mile.

"Five years ago we agreed to a

wage freeze for the length of the contract and increases in payments for health care," said Local 833 President Tim Tayloe in a Nov. 17 interview at the union hall. "Our health care out-of-pocket expenses have gone up 720 percent since then."

The unionists want to end the two-tier structure they were pressured to accept in 2010. Some 1,600 Tier A workers now average \$21 to \$22 an hour, while more recently hired Tier B employees earn an average of \$12.50

Continued on page 9

Inside

Indonesian government bans discussion on 1965 massacre 2

Quebec: Framed-up rail workers plead 'not guilty' 3

Court overturns freeing Albert Woodfox, last of Angola 3 4

—On the picket line, p. 5—

Wives of Steel rally backs locked-out ATI workers

London rail workers hold 2-day strike against anti-union drive

BY PATRICK BROWN

“We have been told to remove all programs to do with ‘1965,’” Janet DeNeeffe wrote to participants in the Oct. 28-Nov. 1 Ubud Writers and Readers Festival on Bali. The five-day event drew 30,000 people. Authorities across Indonesia have stepped up attacks against any exploration, analysis or remembrance of this history. Tom Iljas, a 77-year-old Swedish citizen who visited “a mass grave of 1965 victims in West Sumatra, in search of the final resting place of his father” was deported, the Oct. 27 *Guardian* reported.

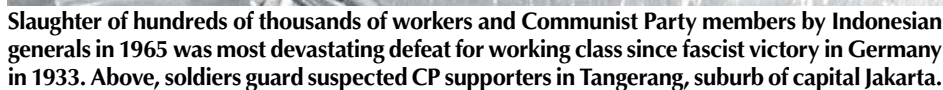
One hundred and thirty-six Indonesian and foreign writers and academics published a letter Oct. 24 condemning these and other attempts to close down discussion.

The slaughter was the most devastating defeat for the working class since the fascist victory in Germany in 1933. To get the full picture, get a copy of the Education for Socialists bulletin *Maoism*

The bloodletting was a calculated move by the military, led by Gen. Suharto, to crush spreading mobilizations by Indonesian workers and peasants. In the eyes of the generals and the imperialist powers supporting them, Indonesia was a huge prize in a revolution-infected region. They feared that the nation of 105 million people would go the same way as Vietnam, where Washington was fighting a losing battle against workers and peasants.

Sukarno, a founder of the Indonesian Nationalist Party, sought to defend capitalist rule while presenting himself as a crusader for democracy and progress. He ruled by playing the military brass to the right off against the PKI to the left.

Party membership reached 3 million by the early 1960s with support from



In 1965 peasants in Central Java and Sumatra seized massive tracts of land from wealthy landowners in several provinces. The PKI pressed them to pull back, but the deepening class struggle convinced the landlords, sections of the military and Washington that a showdown was inevitable.

Once Washington was convinced that Suharto and his cronies meant business, the U.S. Embassy supplied them with equipment and lists of PKI members.

After keeping a now-powerless Sukarno for a couple years, Suharto declared him unfit for office and took over as president. Sukarno was forbidden to speak in public until his death in 1970.

A jump in investment from Japan, the U.S. and other imperialist countries, no longer fearing loss of their capital, led to increased industrialization. The working class increased in weight and numbers, and began to resume labor and political action. Beseet by growing protests and increasingly isolated, Suharto lost backing from both Indonesian capital

Vol. 79/No. 43

Closing news date: November 18, 2015

Editor: John Studer
On the Picket Line Editor: Maggie Trowe

Editorial volunteers: Róger Calero, Naomi Craine, Frank Forrestal, Seth Galinsky, Emma Johnson, Jacob Perasso, Gerardo Sánchez, Maggie Trowe, Brian Williams, Rebecca Williamson.

Published weekly except for one week in January, one week in June, one week in July, one week in August and one week in September.

Business manager: Lea Sherman
The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W.
37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY
10018. **Telephone:** (212) 244-4899
Fax: (212) 244-4947
E-mail: themilitant@mac.com
Website: www.themilitant.com

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: United States: For one year send \$35 to above address.

The space won and defended by working people in the fall of Suharto remains contested ground, as shown by the censorship of events marking the anniversary.

“Even though the programs [about 1965] were removed, everybody is talking about it,” DeNeefe said at the Ubud Festival.

Kadmiyati, one speaker whose program was cancelled, had been detained in the district military headquarters in Banul, near Yogyakarta, when she was a young teacher in 1965 and again in 1966. "I am used to it," she told the *Guardian's* Galuh Wandita when asked if she was disappointed at the cancellation of her talk. "It does not mean we stop speaking out."

www.pathfinderpress.com

Latin America, Caribbean: For one year send \$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

Africa, Asia, and the Middle East: For one year send \$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

Canada: For one year send Canadian \$45 to the Militant, 7107 St. Denis #204, Montreal, Quebec H2S 2S5.

United Kingdom: Send £26 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London, 2nd Floor, 83 Kingsland High St., Dalston, London, E8 2PB, England.

Republic of Ireland and Continental Europe: Send £85 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London at above address.

France: Send 120 euros for one year to Diffusion du Militant, BP 10130, 75723 Paris Cedex 15.

New Zealand: Send NZ\$55 for one year to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland 1140, New Zealand.

Australia: Send A\$50 for one year to P.O. Box 164 Campsie, NSW 2194, Australia.

Pacific Islands: Send NZ\$55 for one year to
P.O. Box 3025, Auckland 1140, New Zealand.

Submissions to the *Militant* may be published in the newspaper in print and digital format. By submitting, authors represent that their submissions are original and consent to publication in this manner.

Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant's* views. These are expressed in editorials.

2 The Militant November 30 , 2015

Quebec: Framed-up rail workers plead ‘not guilty’

BY JOHN STEELE

MONTREAL — Framed-up locomotive engineer Tom Harding and train controller Richard Labrie, members of the United Steelworkers union, pled not guilty in a Lac-Mégantic courtroom Nov. 12 to federal charges filed last June by Canadian government agencies Transport Canada and Environment Canada under the Railway Safety Act and the Fisheries Act. These charges are part of the effort by the government and rail bosses to blame the workers for the July 6, 2013, derailment and explosion of an unmanned 72-car Montreal, Maine and Atlantic oil train in Lac-Mégantic that killed 47 people.

Transport Canada claims that Harding, the train’s only crew member, who had finished his work hours earlier, and Labrie failed to properly carry out their duties. Environment Canada charges that this caused crude oil that leaked from the wreckage to spill into Lake Mégantic and the Chaudière River. Also listed as defendants under the charges is the now defunct Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway and five of its former officials. The penalties under these charges range from fines up to \$1 million and six months in jail.

Harding and Labrie already face frame-up charges of 47 counts of criminal negligence causing death laid by federal prosecutors in Quebec — charges that could bring life imprisonment. Former company manager Jean Demaitre faces the same charges.

“There is a conflict of interest here,” Thomas Walsh, Tom Harding’s lawyer, told the *Militant* in a Nov. 12 phone interview after the hearing. “Transport

Canada has laid charges. But TC officials were the decision makers behind permission for the MMA to run trains with just one locomotive engineer to reduce costs. It is they who looked the other way at the MMA’s disastrous safety record. They remain nameless, but TC officials are responsible for rail safety in Canada. They share a good part of the responsibility for the tragedy.”

Government prosecutors have never explained why they have brought charges against Labrie.

The train was parked on a slope in Nantes, seven miles from Lac-Mégantic. It could have been parked safely on an adjacent siding that was protected by a derailer, but Montreal, Maine and Atlantic bosses chose to store empty boxcars there.

Harding had finished his run and 12-hour shift, left the lead engine running and the air brakes engaged and set hand brakes on seven cars, and went to Lac-Mégantic to sleep. As instructed by MMA bosses, he turned the other four engines off to save money.

Because of poor company maintenance a fire broke out on the engine. The local fire crew shut the engine down. When the company called Harding and told him about the fire, he volunteered to go back, but was told he shouldn’t worry about it, they were sending someone else. The track manager they sent wasn’t familiar with train engines, did nothing and reported everything was OK. Because no engine was running, air pressure for the brakes ran down and the train began rolling into the city, exploded and burst into fire, leveling much of downtown



Inset, Reuters/Mathieu Belanger

Protesters Oct. 11 in Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, where train derailment and explosion killed 47 people in 2013, demand tracks be repaired before trains carrying dangerous cargo pass through town. They blame government and rail bosses for disaster. Inset, engineer Thomas Harding, left, who faces frame-up for derailment, being taken to court in May 2014.



and leaking oil into the soil, lake and river.

A year before the disaster, Transport Canada approved an application from Montreal, Maine and Atlantic bosses to cut train crews to one person to reduce costs and boost profits.

Most people in Lac-Mégantic, a small town of 6,000 where most everyone knew someone who was killed in the disaster, don’t hold the workers responsible for what happened. They believe the company and government should be on trial.

The workers’ union also backs Harding and Labrie and has raised some \$206,000 for their legal defense. “These workers should not be pilloried for negligent management practices of a company like MMA or the federal government’s lax regulation,” Steelworkers District 5 Director Daniel Roy said last year.

More derailments inevitable

Transport of oil from the North Dakota Bakken oil fields to refineries on the East Coast, including the Irving Oil refinery in New Brunswick where Harding’s train was headed, surged beginning in 2010. Production by hydraulic fracking and the lack of pipelines opened the door to profits for rail bosses hauling oil. But today oil prices have tumbled to less than half of what they were.

Feeling the crunch, rail bosses have disregarded safety and track maintenance. Government enablers in both Ottawa and Washington have been complicit. Continuing derailments have been the result.

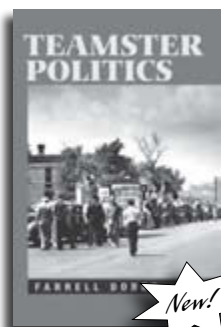
An eastbound Canadian Pacific Railway oil train derailed in Watertown, Wisconsin, Nov. 8, with 13 cars piled up on the tracks, many leaking oil. “We so could have been another Lac-Mégantic,” Sarah Zarling, who lives there with her husband and kids, told the *Minneapolis Star-Tribune*.

The day before, a Burlington Northern and Santa Fe freight train derailed near Alma, Wisconsin, spilling 18,000 gallons of ethanol near the Mississippi River.

In the U.S., the Federal Railroad Administration reported that some 910 derailments were reported in the first eight months of this year, close to a 5 percent increase over last year.

New studies of train derailments

Special book offers for *Militant* subscribers

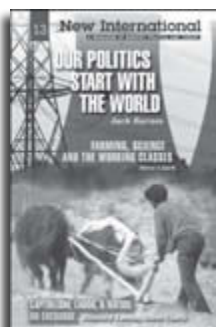


Teamster Politics by Farrell Dobbs

Third in four-volume series

\$10 with subscription
(regular \$19)

Also just released in Spanish

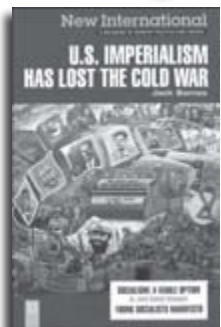


Our Politics Start with the World by Jack Barnes

In New International no. 13

\$7 with subscription
(regular \$14)

Also in Spanish, French, Swedish,
Greek, Farsi, Arabic

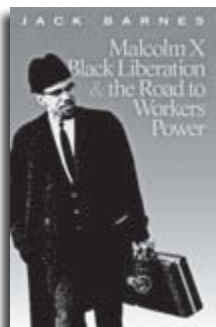


U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War by Jack Barnes

In New International no. 11

\$8 with subscription
(regular \$16)

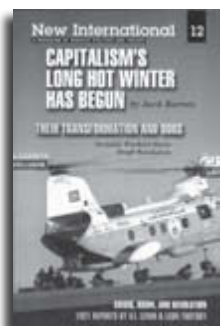
Also in Spanish, French, Greek,
Farsi, Swedish, Icelandic



Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power by Jack Barnes

\$10 with subscription
(regular \$20)

Also in Spanish, French,
Greek, Farsi, Arabic

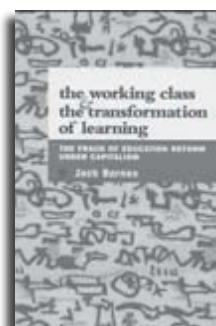


Capitalism's Long Hot Winter Has Begun by Jack Barnes

In New International no. 12

\$8 with subscription
(regular \$16)

Also in Spanish, French, Swedish,
Greek, Farsi, Arabic



The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning

The Fraud of Education
Reform Under Capitalism
by Jack Barnes

\$2 with subscription
(regular \$3)

Also in Spanish, French,
Icelandic, Swedish, Farsi, Greek

If you subscribe or renew, these special offers are for you.
Contact a distributor listed on page 8.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CANADA Montreal

New Weapon in the Fight for Workers Power: Celebrate Publication of French-Language Edition of ‘Socialism on Trial.’ Speakers: Philippe Tessier, Communist League; Marie-Claire David, volunteer in production and promotion of book. Sat., Nov. 28, 7:30 p.m. 7107 St. Denis, Suite 204. Tel.: (514) 272-5840.

NEW ZEALAND Auckland

Washington, Moscow, Paris Step Up Military Intervention in Syria and Iraq, Target Workers Rights at Home. Speaker: Mike Tucker, Communist League. Fri., Nov. 27, 7 p.m. Donation: \$5 waged, \$2 unwaged. 188a Onehunga Mall. Tel.: (09) 636-3231.

Workers march for \$15, union

Continued from front page

ists, fighters against police brutality and others.

“I got involved in the movement a year ago when I was working at McDonald’s,” Mark Bradford, now a Pizza Hut worker, told the *Militant* at a rally in Chicago. “We had broken-down machines, rude management, and I quit because I was only making \$8.30 an hour. I make \$10 at Pizza Hut, which is still not enough. I go to Fight for 15 meetings every month.”

Several thousand marched in Los Angeles and New York, and multiple protests of over 1,000 took place in Chicago and the San Francisco Bay Area. Hundreds rallied in Boston and Washington, D.C.; 300 in Minneapolis; 225 in Atlanta; and 200 in Miami, Philadelphia, Detroit and Rochester, New York. More than 100 protested at the state Capitol in Hartford, Connecticut; in Richmond, Virginia; Baltimore; Fresno, California; and Durham, North Carolina. Dozens joined actions in Indianapolis, Phoenix, and Birmingham, Alabama. Workers protested at two McDonald’s in Jackson, Mississippi, and in small towns such as Muskegon, Michigan. Fifty rallied in Montreal outside the office of Quebec Premier Philippe Couillard.

At the downtown New York rally more than 1,000 members of 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East, most of whom make \$10 an hour, formed a large and spirited contingent. In Los Angeles garment, car wash and laundry workers took part.

Walmart workers demanding \$15 an hour and full-time work participated in many actions around the country.

“I’m glad to be here,” Quin Toomer, a Walmart worker, told the *Militant* at the march in Minneapolis. “We have to do this. If we don’t stand up for ourselves, who will?”

Fight for \$15 making gains

During an early morning march down San Francisco’s Mission Street protesters rallied inside a McDonald’s. “We represent millions living at a poverty level,” Shonda Roberts, a Kentucky Fried Chicken worker who co-founded the East Bay Organizing Committee two years ago, told the demonstrators. “They can afford to pay us \$15 an hour! And we have a right to unionize our co-workers. Our lives do matter.” Roberts recently won her job back after Fight for \$15 supporters protested a retaliatory firing outside the KFC where she works.

Under pressure from the growing movement, a number of major employers — like Walmart, Target and McDonald’s — have announced modest

wage increases to take place over the next couple of years. Some local governments, from New York state to Seattle have set higher minimum wage limits affecting certain categories of workers.

“McDonald’s and our independent franchisees support paying our valued employees fair wages aligned with a competitive marketplace,” the fast-food giant said in a statement released the day of the actions. “We believe that any minimum wage increase should be implemented over time so that the impact on owners of small and medium-sized businesses — like the ones who own and operate the majority of our restaurants — is manageable.”

Since 2009 the federal minimum wage has been stuck at the starvation level of \$7.25 an hour. As the new movement began, President Barack Obama and the Democrats in Congress responded by proposing a new minimum of \$10.10. Under increasing pressure, they raised their proposal to \$12 by 2020.

Some of the large field of Republican presidential challengers in 2016 say they would consider a modest rise in the federal minimum, including Ohio Gov. John Kasich and former U.S. Sen. Rick Santorum from Pennsylvania.

“My father carried mail on his back. His father was a coal miner,” Kasich said during a Republican candidates’ debate the same day as the national actions. “An economic theory is fine, but you know what? People need help.”

Others, including real estate mogul Donald Trump, Marco Rubio, Jeb Bush, Ted Cruz, Chris Christie and former Hewlett Packard CEO Carly Fiorina say no way. Neurosurgeon Ben Carson flip-flopped this month, saying he is now opposed as well.

Wages are too high, and “we’re not



Militant photos: above, Eric Simpson; below, Andy Towbin

Above, fast-food workers inside Alameda, California, Burger King encourage fellow workers to join them, part of Nov. 10 national day of action for \$15 and a union. Below, fast-food, health care, airport and child care workers rally outside County Hall in downtown Miami.

going to be able to compete against the world,” front-runner Trump, who has campaigned as a defender of working people and their standard of living, said at the candidates’ debate. “I hate to say it, but we have to leave it the way it is.”

Democratic front-runner Hillary Clinton backs the position of Obama and her party’s congressional caucus for a \$12 minimum wage.

Challenger Bernie Sanders says he backs a \$15 minimum wage. He spoke at the Washington, D.C., Nov. 10 rally.

The Socialist Workers Party candi-

dates in 2015 — Osborne Hart and John Staggs, for mayor and City Council in Philadelphia, and John Naubert for port commissioner in Seattle — are long-time participants in the movement for \$15 and combatants in the labor movement. Hart and Staggs are Walmart workers.

“Working people need to organize a movement to form our own political party, a labor party based on the unions that can take the reins of power out of the hands of big business,” Staggs said at a candidates’ debate Oct. 27.

Court overturns freeing Albert Woodfox, last of ‘Angola 3’

BY SETH GALINSKY

In a travesty of justice, a federal appeals court on Nov. 9 overturned a lower court decision that had ordered the release of Albert Woodfox and barred Louisiana state prosecutors from putting him on trial for a third time. Woodfox, now 68 years old and in frail health, was framed for the 1972 murder of prison guard Brent Miller and has been held in solitary confinement ever since.

Woodfox is the only member of the “Angola 3” still in prison. Along with Robert King and Herman Wallace, he had organized an inmate chapter of the Black Panther Party at Louisiana State Penitentiary in the town of Angola. All

three were targeted by prison authorities because of their political activities.

Wallace, framed with Woodfox in the killing of Miller, died in 2013 just three days following his release from prison after a court ruled he never received a fair trial. King was released in 2001 after his conviction in the killing of a fellow inmate was overturned.

A date has not yet been set for a new trial. “Albert is clearly and plainly being singled out for harsh treatment,” his lawyer George Kendall said by phone from New York Nov. 13.

There was never any physical evidence connecting Woodfox to the murder, noted Judge James Brady in his June decision to free Woodfox and bar the state from putting him on trial a third time. His case presented “exceptional circumstances to justify an extraordinary remedy,” he wrote.

Prosecutors admit that there would be no case without the testimony of their key witness, inmate Hezekiah Brown. It was not revealed until after the first trial that Brown had been promised better conditions and an eventual pardon in exchange for his testimony.

Woodfox’s first two convictions were overturned on appeal because of blatant racial discrimination in the selection of the grand juries that brought the indictments.

“For over four decades, Mr. Woodfox has been housed in a small, single cell, in 23-hours-a-day lockdown,” Judge

Brady said, adding that given the prosecutors’ previous conduct, there is no reason to believe that a third trial would respect Woodfox’s constitutional rights.

In its 2-to-1 ruling overturning Brady’s decision, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit did not challenge the main facts he cited, but claimed they are either “irrelevant” or “better addressed in other proceedings.”

In a stinging dissent, appeals court Judge James Dennis wrote, “If ever a case justifiably could be considered to present ‘exceptional circumstances’ barring reprosecution, this is that case.”

Woodfox’s attorneys are considering appealing the decision to the Supreme Court, Kendall said. A civil suit by Woodfox, challenging his conditions in solitary confinement, will begin June 29 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Since Feb. 12, Woodfox has been held at the West Feliciana Parish Detention Center. “In Angola and Wade prisons he could see people passing by through the bars on the cell door and wave hi,” Kendall said. “Now he has a steel door and he can’t do that. But they’ve given him a TV and a phone.” His calls are recorded and he’s not allowed to speak with reporters.

Prison authorities have been unable to break Woodfox’s spirit. “I am living proof that we can survive the worst to change ourselves and our world no matter where we are,” he told a visitor in April 2014.

Walmart workers press for union rights in China

Workers at a Walmart in Shenzhen, China, are pressing to elect union officers without interference from the company or officials of the government-sponsored All-China Federation of Trade Unions, and they’re denouncing the company for sabotaging their efforts. Walmart has nearly 400 stores in 147 cities throughout China, and employs more than 100,000 workers.

Zhang Liya, a veteran worker at store no. 1059, announced in September he would run for union president against the slate selected by the incumbents. Zhang and his sup-

porters criticize current officials for not fighting recent layoffs and store closures and for settling for wage increases far lower than before the state-backed union was organized at Walmart in 2006.

Workers in China confront abuses similar to those the retail giant’s employees are combating in the U.S. — low wages, sex discrimination, unpaid overtime, part-time jobs, retaliatory firing of those who organize or complain, as well as elimination of a small housing subsidy the company had provided in the past.

— MAGGIE TROWE

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

MAGGIE TROWE, EDITOR

Help the *Militant* cover labor struggles across the country!

This column is dedicated to giving voice to those engaged in battle and building solidarity today — including workers fighting for \$15 and a union; locked-out ATI Steelworkers; auto, steel and Verizon workers whose contracts have expired. I invite those involved in workers' battles to contact me at 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018; or (212) 244-4899; or themilitant@mac.com. We'll work together to ensure your story is told.

— Maggie Trowe

London rail workers hold 2-day strike against anti-union drive

LONDON — Rail workers, members of the RMT union, shut down KeolisAmey Docklands Light Railway service in East London for 48 hours Nov. 3-5.

"There are 13 issues in this strike, but they all boil down to one: KeolisAmey," Darren Arnold, a steward in the control room and a member of the union negotiating committee, told the *Militant* on the picket line.

The unionists voted 92 percent to strike against the growing use of staffing agency work, training of managers to do safety-critical jobs and "a creeping culture of bullying and intimidation of staff," a union press release said. This is the first strike in 28 years to shut down the railway, which includes connections between London's two financial districts and City airport.

Training managers to perform work of control room technicians responsible for the track power supply "is a major safety concern," Arnold said. "They may get trained but won't be doing it for two to three months, so they won't be in practice. This was the main reason we had to strike now. We can't just go on talking for six months when workers' lives are being endangered on the tracks."

The company has hired lower-paid agency workers in customer service and P-way (track maintenance). "At first they said it was for seasonal work on the P-way," Arnold said. "But now they have six agency workers on every shift."

The union has contested workers being disciplined for taking time off after being assaulted on the job or after a "one under," when a person gets hit by the train.

Fifty workers gathered at the gates of Poplar Depot Nov. 9 to discuss the next steps in their fight. Stewards coming out of a meeting with management reported that there's no agreement on any of the issues in dispute and presented proposals for further union action.

— Ögmundur Jónsson

Toronto janitors protest firings, picket for union, pay raise

TORONTO — Janitors and supporters organized a lunch-hour picket Nov.

10 in front of Dream Office REIT property management downtown here. The nearly two dozen workers, who want to be represented by Service Employees International Union Local 2, were demanding the company require its contractors to comply with labor laws.

The workers say contractor Amphora Maintenance Ltd. fired 14 cleaners for union-organizing activity. They demand Amphora pay more than \$25,000 in termination and severance pay.

The janitors also accuse Impact Cleaning Services Ltd., another con-



SEIU Local 2/Justice for Janitors

Toronto janitors picket Dream Office REIT property management Nov. 10, protesting retaliatory firings by contractors of workers involved in union activity and demanding wage increase.

tractor, of paying less than the Ontario provincial minimum wage and vacation pay, and they demand more than \$18,000 in compensation.

Several Filipino organizations who support the fight of the majority-Filipino

workforce issued a statement distributed at the picket defending the workers' "right to work in healthy and safe working environments" and "to form a workers union to be recognized and upheld!"

— Tony Di Felice

Wives of Steel rally backs locked-out ATI workers

BY REGINA STINSON

VANDERGRIFT, Pa. — Wives of Steel, a group of spouses of members of the United Steelworkers locked out by Allegheny Technologies Inc., hosted a picket line rally for members of Steelworkers Local 1138 at the ATI plant here Nov. 4. More than 200 people came to show their support, including from the locals in Brackenridge and Latrobe.

ATI locked out 2,200 Steelworkers at 12 plants in six states Aug. 15. The company wants concessions that would slash health care, institute 12-hour shifts, cut pensions for current and future workers, reduce wages and overtime pay and contract out more work.

Wives of Steel has organized these rallies since July, and this one was a big success, not only measured by the amount of support we received from other unions, but because of the community support we got while standing on the line. The plant here

is located on a very busy intersection and people driving by joined in by honking their horns, giving us the thumbs up and yelling, "Go home, scabs."

These rallies are an opportunity for the men and women and their families to make a loud and clear message in their fight for a fair contract with ATI.

It is hard to stand on the picket line day-in and day-out during scheduled picket shifts and not be able to say much to the scabs (replacement workers and truckers) going in and out of the plant. There are normally anywhere from three to six guys on the picket line during a four-hour shift, and — let's face it — that just isn't enough to get the point across to the scabs that they are crossing a union picket line.

When you have 200-plus unionists and family members slowly walking in the crosswalk, it makes it hard for the scabs leaving and entering the

plants to just pull out and go on their way.

The strikebreakers are beginning to be more aggressive verbally and physically. Laughing in our faces and showing paychecks is one thing, but driving erratically or swerving toward pickets is provocative and a safety issue.

Rallies promote a disciplined environment for us to yell "scab" and let them and ATI know how we feel about being locked out of our jobs.

On Nov. 9, 150 turned out for a picket line rally held at the ATI plant in Louisville, Ohio, 120 miles west of here. Local 1046 picket captain Dwayne Smedley reported support from the Steelworkers at Timkins Steel in nearby Canton, Ohio, and the Timkins Wives of Steel, as well as from Pat Fallot, mayor of Louisville, Ohio.

Regina Stinson is an organizer of Wives of Steel in Vandergrift, Pennsylvania.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



November 30, 1990

Bernard Sanders, who publicly presents himself as a socialist, defeated both the Democratic and Republican contenders for Vermont's only congressional seat in the recent elections.

Although Sanders has run for and been elected to public office as an "independent" and a "socialist," neither his record nor his political perspectives offer a road forward for working people.

Sanders operates totally in the framework of the capitalist system and accepts the limits it imposes. He has stated that his model for "socialism" is imperialist Sweden's social welfare program. Through reforms he attempts to make capitalism work more decently for the majority. But neither his efforts nor those of like-minded reformers has halted or could halt the employers' offensive against working people or won working people protection from the ravages that are coming.



November 29, 1965

NOV. 23 — The events of the past two weeks have underscored the need to bring the GIs home from the senseless slaughter in the illegal war in Vietnam. At the same time the opportunity for the antiwar movement here in the U.S. to help bring about an end to the war has also increased.

The battles in the Iadrang Valley of Vietnam, where U.S. troops have suffered by far their heaviest casualties of the war, show the impossibility of an end to the war by a quick victory of U.S. forces. In spite of overwhelming superiority of U.S. equipment, in spite of massive tactical support by airplanes — all on the U.S. side and none on the other — and in spite of massive bombings in a scale larger than in any previous war, U.S. spokesmen acknowledge that the strength of the Vietnamese revolutionaries is increasing.



November 30, 1940

Letters of protest, demanding the freedom of the Negro sailors on the U.S.S. Philadelphia and an end to the Jim Crow practices in the Navy, began to pour into the offices of President Roosevelt and Secretary of the Navy Knox last week at the same time that the government announced its intention of standing by the policy of segregating colored sailors to the mess attendants division only.

The letters from various organizations and individuals printed in the *Pittsburgh Courier* last week showed that an increasing number of people are aroused over the case of the imprisoned Philadelphia sailors.

The N.A.A.C.P. upheld the action of the mess attendants in bravely signing their names to the published letter of complaint, saying they had done so "in belief that they had a just complaint, which ought not to be weakened by an anonymous letter."

Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay

by Leon Trotsky

"More food for thought (and action) than will be found in any book on the union question." —From preface by Farrell Dobbs. \$16

pathfinderpress.com

Paris, Washington war moves

Continued from front page

Rulers in Washington, London and other imperialist capitals joined in denouncing the assaults and proposing new attacks on workers' rights in their own countries.

Pointing to Islamic State's responsibility for blowing up a planeload of Russian tourists in Egypt Oct. 31, Moscow joined France in bombing Raqqa, the de facto capital of the IS "caliphate" in Syria, beginning Nov. 16.

IS suicide bombers stormed the Bataclan concert hall in Paris Nov. 13, gunning down 89 people attending a performance by U.S. rock band Eagles of Death Metal. Others wearing bomb belts detonated themselves outside Stade de France soccer stadium where the French and German national teams were playing. Assassination squads fired point blank into several nearby restaurants and bars. IS says eight of its members were involved. The anti-working-class jihadists killed more than 130 people, wounding over 350.

Islamic State issued a statement celebrating their assault as "a blessed battle." They said they attacked the soccer match because the teams represents "crusader nations" and workers and youth at the Bataclan were "pagans gathered for a concert of prostitution and vice."

The brutal IS terror attacks, the imperialists' steps to take advantage of them to push for wider war and moves to slash political rights are blows to the working class.

While many workers are drawn into the patriotic orgy whipped up by the propertied French rulers, some are opposed. "I'm worried that a whole community is going to get blamed for this," Farid Borsali, 46, an auto assembly worker and general secretary of the CGT union at the Peugeot plant in Poissy outside Paris, told the *Militant*. "We need to try to unite workers, not let ourselves be divided."

The overwhelming majority of Muslims oppose the Islamic State attacks. This is "bad for the people who died and bad for my religion, Islam," said Samir Amer, 41, who was born in Morocco and also works at the auto plant. "Now people who see me going to the mosque — and I have a beard — are going to think I'm like the people who did this."

Seven of the attackers were killed — six by blowing themselves up, one

in a shootout with police — and a cross-border manhunt is on in France, Belgium and beyond.

This was the second deadly terror assault in Paris this year. In January, two Islamist thugs shot up the offices of satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo*, killing 13 cartoonists and others, and another killed four shoppers in the Hyper Cacher kosher market in a Jewish district.

While President Barack Obama joined French officials in denouncing the killings, he chose not to adjust his schedule to visit Paris. He stressed he continues to oppose deploying more U.S. ground troops in Syria and Iraq, saying instead Washington's military would step up bombing.

There are growing calls among Republicans and Democrats alike for a more robust U.S. military response.

Obama should shift from a "consistently underpowered" military course "by deploying more Special Operations forces" to work with Arabs and Kurds moving to take IS-controlled Raqqa, to join with Iraqi and Kurdish forces to push toward Mosul in Iraq, and to directly supply more weapons, the *Washington Post* said Nov. 16.

Ignored amidst imperialist leaders rushing to profess solidarity with France's rulers is the loss of 44 lives in double suicide-bombing attacks targeting Arabs and Muslims in Beirut, Lebanon, the day before the Paris attack.

Hollande declares state of emergency

Hours after the assault Hollande declared a state of emergency, allowing police to search homes without a warrant, impose curfews and place anyone authorities consider "dangerous" under house arrest. Some 1,500 French troops were deployed in Paris. Street demonstrations were banned until at the earliest Nov. 19.

Hollande, leader of the Socialist Party government, announced he was reasserting French control over its borders, tossing aside free movement between countries in Europe established by the European Union.

France has one of the largest Arab and Muslim populations in Europe, a product of the workings of its colonial empire and imperialist wars. During the 1950s and early '60s, French troops fought a bloody but unsuccessful war against a popular revolution in Algeria, and conducted fierce repression on the Algerian community in France.

Syria's borders were drawn in secret negotiations for control over the region between Paris and London a century ago after the overthrow of the Ottoman Empire. France got what became Syria and Lebanon, while the U.K. got Iraq, Jordan and Palestine.

French Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve said Nov. 16 that 23 people had been arrested in 168 raids overnight and another 104 put under house arrest. "This is just the beginning," he added. Dozens of Belgian police and armed commandos surrounded houses in the overwhelmingly Arab district of Molenbeek in Brussels the same day.

Some 30,000 cops imposed border controls at the country's 285 road, rail, sea and air checkpoints in an op-



Reuters/Christian Hartmann

French police stop and search local resident during raid in Saint-Denis, near Paris, Nov. 18. Imperialist rulers seized on brutal Islamic State assault to target political rights, escalate war.

eration authorities say will last at least through the conclusion of the U.N.-sponsored climate conference scheduled to open in Paris Nov. 30.

French officials have not yet said whether they will ban a Nov. 29 demonstration called by trade union and other groups to press for stronger protection of the environment.

Government figures called for stepped-up spying on mosques and Arab communities and discussed new restrictions on the 10,000 or so people in French spy agencies' "S files."

Rulers across Europe seized on the developments in France to shift the debate on how to handle the tens of thousands of refugees streaming in from the deepening war and social disaster in Syria.

While the majority of the Islamic State murderers were either French citizens or residents of Belgium, there is evidence that one of them entered Europe by joining refugees crossing into Greece.

Markus Söder, the Bavarian finance minister and member of the Christian Social Union, one of the parties in Chancellor Angela Merkel's coalition government, called for federal police to impose controls on all border crossings with Austria. If not, he threatened, Bavaria would take matters into its own hands.

Demands for a halt to acceptance of Syrian refugees in the U.S. swelled as well. Within a few days of the attacks in Paris, the majority of state governors, including both Democrats and Republicans, called for shutting the program down.

In Washington, New York and other cities authorities beefed up police patrols, increasing inspections of buses, trains and passengers' bags. On the CBS news program "Face the Nation" Nov. 15 New York City Police Commissioner William Bratton described the Paris attacks as a "game changer" for the cops.

With 2,000 police already deployed in special counterterrorism units, the city is fielding a new antiterror squad, Bratton and Mayor Bill de Blasio said the next day. The first assignment for the 560-member Critical Response Command, armed with heavy equipment, is to stake out the New Year's Eve celebration in Times Square.

CIA Director John Brennan said restrictions on data collection and electronic spying have made it "much more challenging" to track potential terrorists. "I do hope this will be a

wake-up call," he said Nov. 16.

The vast majority of the victims of Islamic State murder, torture and oppression are Arabs and Muslims in IS-controlled areas. The reactionary outfit seized parts of western Iraq and Syria during the nearly five-year-long civil war in Syria. Paving the way for its emergence was the political exhaustion of the bourgeois nationalist forces that arose throughout the Middle East after World War II, combined with betrayals of worker and peasant struggles by Stalinist parties in the region. The Arab Baath Socialist Party, led since 1970 by Hafez al-Assad and since 2000 by his son Bashar al-Assad, imposed a brutal capitalist regime, backed by Moscow.

Origins of Islamic State

In response to growing protests in 2011 demanding an end to Assad's dictatorial rule, the regime cracked down with arrests, bombings, starvation sieges and use of chemical weapons. Since then some 250,000 people have been killed and more than 11 million — half the country's population — have been driven from their homes.

Islamic State stepped into this vacuum, seizing territory and imposing a bloody rule wherever they took control.

Washington views IS as an obstacle to its efforts to enforce a semblance of stability in the region and protect U.S. imperialist interests.

Since August 2014 a U.S.-led coalition has conducted some 8,000 airstrikes — the vast majority by Washington — against Islamic State in Iraq and Syria.

The Institute for the Study of War, which advocates stronger U.S. intervention in Syria, recently called for loosening the rules of engagement, not worrying so much about killing civilians.

Moscow began airstrikes in Syria at the end of September, purportedly against Islamic State but instead concentrating its bombings to prop up Assad's tattered regime, targeting opposition groups in western Syria fighting to end his rule.

France is now moving to play a larger role, pressing the Obama administration to work with Moscow to concentrate their fire against Islamic State.

Derek Jeffers in Paris contributed to this article.

IN NEW INTERNATIONAL NO. 7

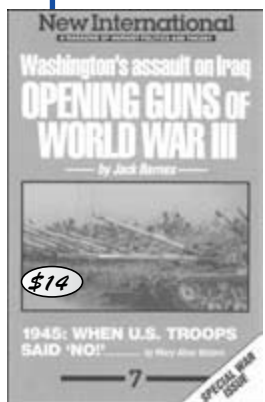
Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq

by Jack Barnes

Also features:

The Working-Class Campaign Against Imperialism and War

Communists Don't Have a Revolutionary Policy for Peacetime and a Peace Policy for Wartime



Available in English, Farsi, French, Spanish, Swedish

www.pathfinderpress.com

Cuba's defense of Angola

Continued from front page

the 40th anniversary of Angolan independence. “The U.S. government, together with the racist regime in South Africa, sought to derail independence and impose a puppet government that would assure the continuation of imperialist interests.”

By mid-October 1975 troops and mercenaries had invaded from Zaire [now the Democratic Republic of Congo] in the north and South Africa in the south. At the request of Agostinho Neto, leader of the MPLA, the Cuban government sent military instructors to train the Angolan forces.

On Nov. 2 a group of instructors and their students faced an attack by the invading forces in Benguela. Eight instructors and dozens of inexperienced Angola youth lost their lives.

Neto asked for Cuban aid. Without a moment's hesitation, Cuba's revolutionary leadership agreed. By Nov. 4 the first of 36,000 Cuban volunteer soldiers were on their way. López, today chief of the general staff of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces, was among them. By Nov. 14 the South African troops were forced to retreat 620 miles.

“Operation Carlota” had begun. Then Defense Minister Raúl Castro chose the name to honor “an exceptional African woman, a slave in Cuba who led two rebellions against colonial oppression,” López said. “Captured after the second attempt [which began Nov. 5, 1843], she was drawn and quartered, just what the imperialists intended to do with Angola in 1975.”

Although the apartheid army was pushed back, the South African government and Washington had not given up hope of violently overturning the new government in Angola.

The internationalist volunteers — led by Cuban President Fidel Castro, who sometimes stayed round the clock in the command center in Cuba — “were decisive in bringing fundamental change to the history of southern Africa,” López said.

By March 1988 Cuban and Angolan troops defeated South Africa's last attempt to turn back history at the battle of Cuito Cuanavale. The victory not only secured Angola's sovereignty, but forced the South African regime to concede independence to Namibia and gave a tremendous boost to the revolutionary

struggle to end apartheid.

The mission also had a profound impact in Cuba.

Numerous articles in the Cuban press, and this year's commemorations, are aimed at keeping alive and inspiring new generations in Cuba with this internationalist spirit.

An article titled “The Most Just, Prolonged, Massive and Successful International Military Campaign of Our Country” in the Nov. 5 issue of *Granma* notes that even now it's almost impossible to find a household in Cuba that doesn't have a family member or friend who had served in Angola.

Three of the Cuban Five — René González, Fernando González and Gerardo Hernández — were part of Operation Carlota. The Five are revolutionaries who were arrested, framed up and jailed in the United States in 1998. The last of them returned home in a victory for the Cuban Revolution last December.

“We will always keep in a special part of our hearts the pride of having participated in the freedom fight on the African continent,” Hernández said at a Nov. 5 commemoration at the Triunvirato sugar refinery, Matanzas province, where the slave uprising led by Carlota began in 1843.

‘Our moral high ground’

CubaDebate website published an article Nov. 5 by Operation Carlota veteran Ventura Carballido Pupo.

“I didn't have any money in my pockets,” Carballido wrote about their return to Cuba, “because we were not mercenaries who went to war to risk our lives for money.”

“Our greatest wealth was the moral high ground, patriotism and the satisfaction of having done our duty to Fidel and the Party,” he added. “Without fondness for anything material, everything was happiness. Our greatest sadness was that not all of us returned alive.”

According to *Granma*, 2,016 Cubans died in Angola during the mission.

“Few times in history, has a war — the most terrible, heartrending and difficult action by humans — been accompanied by such a high degree of humanism and modesty by the victors,” Fidel Castro said in December 2005.

In his speech in Havana, López highlighted Cuba's ongoing collabora-

Cuban leader: ‘Help fight to lift US embargo’



Bill Hackwell

RICHMOND, Calif. — At a packed meeting of 200 people here Nov. 13, Kenia Serrano, above, president of the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples, hailed the opening of diplomatic relations between the U.S. and Cuba as a “victory of international solidarity.”

“It came because the U.S. policy toward Cuba was a failure,” she said. “It left the U.S. isolated. It came without Cuba making any concessions. We continue on our path of building socialism.”

Serrano thanked the many individuals and organizations in the audience who were part of the international campaign to free the Cuban Five, five revolutionaries imprisoned by Washington in 1998 for working to protect Cuba from violent attacks by enemies of the revolution based in the U.S.

“Support is now needed for lifting the U.S. economic blockade, that is a tremendous obstacle on Cuba's development,” Serrano said.

Richmond's mayor, Tom Butt, and City Councilwoman and former Mayor Gayle McLaughlin welcomed Serrano. Butt read a proclamation calling for an end to the U.S. embargo against Cuba. The meeting was chaired by Alicia Jrapko of the International Committee for Peace, Justice and Dignity, which along with others sponsored the event.

Walter Turner, president of the board of directors of Global Exchange, which coordinated the Bay Area visit by Serrano and Leima Martínez, a representative of the institute's North American division, highlighted Cuba's record of international solidarity. “We would not have seen the freeing of Nelson Mandela without what the Cubans did, sending troops to Angola to fight the invading South African apartheid army,” he said. “Three of the Cuban Five fought in Angola.”

A life-size image of Oscar López Rivera, the Puerto Rican independence fighter who has been held for 34 years in U.S. jails, was on the stage. López sent a message to the meeting that was read by Karina Valentín, his granddaughter. Serrano said Cuba stands with the campaign to win his freedom, pointing out that Fernando González, one of the Cuban Five, spent four years in the same cell with him.

Next week's *Militant* will report on all the Bay Area tour events, including a meeting of over 100 sponsored by the ANSWER Coalition and the Bay Area Latin American Solidarity Coalition in San Francisco, Serrano's appearance at the Commonwealth Club, Serrano and Martínez's meeting with leaders of farmworkers' struggles and fast-food workers and their exchange with dozens of students at San Francisco State University.

— BETSEY STONE

UK court tells gov't: ‘Give visa to René González’

BY PAUL DAVIES

In a victory for working people in the United Kingdom and a blow to London's decades-long effort to slander and isolate the Cuban Revolution, the Court of Appeal Nov. 10 overturned the government's decision to deny a visa to Cuban revolutionary René González.

González, who from 1977 to 1979 served as part of Cuba's internationalist mission in Angola, helping to defeat attacks by the white-supremacist South African regime, had been invited to visit with Members of Parliament in 2014 to discuss the fight to win freedom for the Cuban Five. González was one of the Five, Cuban revolutionaries imprisoned in the U.S. for their efforts to keep the Cuban government informed of plans for attacks against the revolution by paramilitary forces in Florida with a

long record of bombings and other assaults against Cuba.

González was sentenced to 15 years and returned to Cuba in 2013 after serving out his time. The worldwide campaign to win freedom for the Five was successful and the final three were released as part of Washington's decision to re-open diplomatic negotiations with Cuba in December 2014.

The Home Office denied González a visa twice in 2014, arguing he was a threat to national security in the U.K. A group of 28 MPs, including Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn, appealed the decision as a violation of the European Convention on Human Rights. The appeals court ruled unanimously in favor of the challenge, barring the government from taking their efforts to keep González out of the country to the Su-

preme Court.

“We hope that this decision means we can now look forward to welcoming Mr. González, the other four heroes — Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Fernando González and Antonio Guerrero — and their families in Britain as soon as possible,” Cuba Solidarity Campaign director Rob Miller said Nov. 11.

“I applaud the court's decision, but it shouldn't have been necessary,” John Walcott, a carpenter from London and supporter of the fight to win freedom for the Cuban Five, told the *Militant*. “Why did they prevent him from coming here? The U.S. locked him in prison for so many years, then they let him loose but they're still afraid of him. I hope he'll come, anything that promotes the Cuban Revolution advances the interest of working people.”

Cuba's “Operation Miracle” has treated 600,000 patients and performed nearly 34,000 eye surgeries there. More than 2,000 Angolans are currently studying in Cuba, he said.

“The imperialists will never understand that we didn't go to Angola to pursue material interests,” the Cuban general said. “We did it to pay our debt with the history of our brothers of African nations, blood brothers who fought for our independence, and with their sweat and blood helped forge and develop the wealth of our country.”

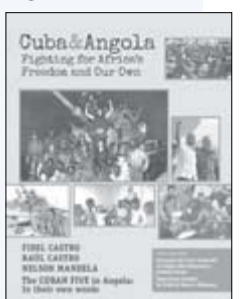
Further Reading

Cuba & Angola

Fighting for Africa's Freedom and Our Own

Fidel Castro
Raúl Castro
Nelson Mandela
The Cuban Five
and others

Includes:
‘Operation Carlota’
by Gabriel García Márquez



\$12 — Also in Spanish

www.pathfinderpress.com

SWP has growing opportunities to spread its ideas today

The French edition of Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for November. This excerpt is from presentations at regional socialist educational conferences on April 10, 1993, in Greensboro, North Carolina, and the following day at a similar gathering in Des Moines, Iowa. Copyright © 1999 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY JACK BARNES

The *Militant* has been running an ad for this weekend's conference entitled "Challenges Facing the Working Class." That's fine. But in this talk I want to alter the focus to, "Challenges and Opportunities Facing the Working Class." I would like to open discussion here on the proposition that communists confront fewer obstacles in spreading revolutionary ideas today — in working together with other working-class and revolutionary-minded fighters who are not yet communists, and distributing communist literature on a wider scale in this country and around the world — than we have faced for decades.

We not only need to see these oppor-



Militant/Janet Post

John Staggs, center, recent SWP candidate for Philadelphia City Council, campaigns at 2015 Labor Day parade. "Communists confront fewer obstacles in spreading revolutionary ideas today — in working together with other working-class and revolutionary-minded fighters, and distributing communist literature," said Jack Barnes, "than we have faced for decades."

tunities in their longer-run context, but to grasp — and accept — the responsibilities they imply. I have had some help in preparing this presentation, since I was fortunate enough to have just spent four days in New York at an international meeting of leaderships of communist leagues from around the world and of youth who are leaders of the Socialist Workers Party. We came to agreement at that meeting that the idea of a "New World Order" — with which global bourgeois opinion was so enamored right after the war against Iraq — is now behind us, and that a pattern of disintegration of the capitalist world order is starting to emerge.

Think about the world we have practiced politics in since late 1987 when panic swept stock markets from New York to Hong Kong. Think about the events that have transpired since then — from the Soviet Union, to China, to South Africa, to Cuba, to Europe (East, West, and Central), and to the United States. It has been a very unusual six years.

The evidence is, however, that the changes that caused the greatest surprises are behind us. That is, we can now better anticipate the character and the broad response of different classes to the world conflicts that are unfolding and will continue to unfold. We can begin to describe — and then analyze — this pattern.

We know what is going to happen with the capitalist economy. Regardless of conjunctural ups and downs, the reality of the opening of a world depression

and its deflationary bias will not go away. Cyclical capitalist recoveries, regardless of their duration, will be marked by that deflationary reality. It will mark the assaults on the working class and the increasing economic, and even social, differentiation within our class. And it will mark the character of the contest between the working-class vanguard and the capitalist rulers over how badly our class will be damaged by the workings of the market system before large-scale resistance begins. ...

U.S. imperialism will use its weight — be it police power, be it economic coercion, be it grinding pressure on the job, be it threats abroad, be it organizing direct military intervention or precipitating bloody struggles in other countries it pretends to stand above — in order to try to compensate for the disintegration of the stability of an expanding, self-confident capitalist social and economic order. How it does so, and the effects, dominate the patterns of world politics. Economic instability, social dislocation, and political radicalization — right and left: that is what all of us are slowly but surely being pulled into. ...

I think the danger we face today, however, is not one of impatience or exaggerated expectations. The danger is being unable to face up to the implications of where the social crisis is headed. The crisis is heading toward the kinds of struggles, toward a shift in the pace of political life, that practically no one in this room has ever seen. It is heading toward battles with the kind of explosive character and violence that are seen only

infrequently in the development of class society.

Thinking workers and other fighters sense that a corner has been turned. As pressures from the rising class tensions build, they sense that today's deepening crisis — at whatever pace it unfolds, and with whatever twists and turns — will not be resolved short of battles in which reactionary forces will be unleashed in the streets against the labor movement and its allies. If communists do not clearly and forthrightly explain what is coming, then the anticipation of these developments can drive us away from the line of march of the working class and even make cowards of us over time, to our belated surprise.

It is often said that great historical crises are always and only resolved in struggle; you do not have to be much of a historian to know that makes sense. But what is not said as often is that the odds in these class struggles — the probability of victory or of loss — are determined long before the battles themselves break out. The odds depend on the self-confidence, political clarity, and previous combat experience of vanguard forces who see the political trends and who are already among the fighters on one side or the other of the class barricades. They depend on the preparations by cadres of disciplined proletarian organizations who know that what they have done *beforehand* will be decisive when the working class moves toward revolutionary action.

The best example, of course, is the October 1917 revolution in Russia. Prior to the revolution, the Bolsheviks were a relatively small force many of whose leaders, above all V.I. Lenin, had worked for nearly a quarter-century with a very clear idea of the character, inevitability, and depth of the crisis that was coming. Every "legitimate" force — including in the broad left wing of the international socialist labor movement of that day — considered the Bolsheviks to be an irksome minority of extremists doomed to inconsequentiality. But it was the Bolsheviks who were able to lead the workers and peasants in putting an end to the horrors and the bloodshed of World War I, and of capitalist and landlord domination in the tsarist empire.

That kind of political preparation, for those kinds of coming class battles, remains the central task of small communist organizations today.

November
BOOKS OF THE MONTH

PATHFINDER READERS CLUB SPECIALS
25% DISCOUNT

Le désordre mondial du capitalisme
(Capitalism's World Disorder)
by Jack Barnes
The lawful workings of capitalism bring social devastation, financial panic, cop brutality and imperialist aggression. Yet the future can be changed by the united struggle of working people.
\$25. **Special price: \$18.75**

The Balkan Wars (1912-1913)
by Leon Trotsky
\$35. **Special price: \$26.25**

Humanism and Socialism
by George Novack
\$15. **Special price: \$11.25**

In Defense of Socialism
by Fidel Castro
"Socialism is and will continue to be the only hope, the only road for the peoples, the oppressed, the exploited, the plundered."
— Fidel Castro, December 1988
\$15. **Special price: \$11.25**

Revolutionary Continuity: The Early Years, 1848-1917
by Farrell Dobbs
\$20. **Special price: \$15**

Fighting Racism in World War II
\$25. **Special price: \$18.75**

Join Pathfinder Readers Club for \$10 and receive discounts all year long

ORDER ONLINE AT
WWW.PATHFINDERPRESS.COM
OFFER GOOD UNTIL NOVEMBER 30



IF YOU LIKE THIS PAPER, LOOK US UP

Where to find distributors of the *Militant*, *New International*, and a full display of Pathfinder books.

UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA: **Oakland:** 675 Hegenberger Road, Suite 250. Zip: 94621. Tel: (510) 686-1351. E-mail: swpoak@sbcglobal.net **Los Angeles:** 2826 S. Vermont. Suite 1. Zip: 90007. Tel: (323) 643-4968. E-mail: swpla@att.net

FLORIDA: **Miami:** 7911 Biscayne Blvd., Suite 2. Zip: 33138. Tel: (305) 757-8869. E-mail: swpmiami@att.net

GEORGIA: **Atlanta:** 777 Cleveland Ave. SW Suite 103. Zip: 30315. Tel: (678) 528-7828. E-mail: swpatlanta@bellsouth.net

ILLINOIS: **Chicago:** 2018 S. Ashland Ave. Zip: 60608. Tel: (312) 455-0111. E-mail: SWPChicago@fastmail.fm

MINNESOTA: **Minneapolis:** 416 E. Hennepin Ave., Suite 214. Zip: 55414. Tel: (612) 729-1205. E-mail: tcswp@qwestoffice.net

NEBRASKA: **Lincoln:** Tel: (402) 217-4906. E-mail: swplincoln@windstream.net.

NEW YORK: **New York:** P.O. Box 1233. Zip: 10018. Tel: (646) 434-8117. E-mail: newyorkswp@gmail.com

PENNSYLVANIA: **Philadelphia:** 3701 Pulaski Ave. Zip: 19140. Tel: (215) 225-1270. E-mail: philaswp@verizon.net

WASHINGTON, D.C.: 143 Kennedy St. NW, Suite 15. Zip: 20011. Tel: (202) 536-5080. E-mail: swp.washingtondc@verizon.net

WASHINGTON: **Seattle:** 5418 Rainier Ave. South. Zip: 98118-2439. Tel: (206) 323-1755. E-mail: seattleswp@qwestoffice.net

AUSTRALIA

Sydney: 1st Flr, 3/281-287 Beamish St., Campsie, NSW 2194. Mailing address: P.O. Box 164, Campsie, NSW 2194. Tel: (02) 9718 9698. E-mail: cl_australia@optusnet.com.au

CANADA

QUEBEC: **Montreal:** 7107 St. Denis #204 H2S 2S5. Tel: (514) 272-5840. E-mail: clc_can@bellnet.ca **ALBERTA:** **Calgary:** 4909 17th Ave. SE, Unit 154. T2A 0V5. Tel: (403) 457-9044. E-mail: clccalgary@fastmail.fm

FRANCE

Paris: BP 10130, 75723 Paris Cedex 15. Tel: 01 40-10-28-37 E-mail: milpath.paris@laposte.net

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland: 188a Onehunga Mall, Onehunga. Postal address: P.O. Box 3025, Auckland 1140. Tel: (09) 636-3231. E-mail: clauack@xtra.co.nz

UNITED KINGDOM

ENGLAND: **London:** 2nd Floor, 83 Kingsland High St., Dalston. Postal code: E8 2PB. Tel: (020) 3583-3553. E-mail: clondon@fastmail.fm **Manchester:** Room 301, 3rd floor, Hilton House, 26-28 Hilton St. Postal code: M1 2EH. Tel: (016) 1478-2496. E-mail: clmanchr@gmail.com

U.S. troops, warplanes out of Mideast!

Continued from front page

Hollande calls for a “grand coalition” to step up the war, based on Paris, Washington and Moscow. Washington and its allies have used terror to defend their class interests, from dropping the atomic bomb to incinerate Hiroshima and Nagasaki, to the leveling of city after city in North Korea during the 1950-53 war against workers and farmers there, to Iraq and Afghanistan. France’s capitalist rulers have a long and bloody record of imperialist intervention and exploitation, from Algeria to Vietnam, Syria to Mali.

The Socialist Workers Party calls on workers in the U.S. to oppose moves by Washington and Paris to expand their Mideast war. Demand they get their bombers and troops out of the region. Speak out against discrimination against Syrian refugees and against anti-Arab, anti-Muslim demagoguery.

The SWP opposes efforts by the capitalist rulers in Washington to seize the opportunity to step up assaults against political rights and to widen use of troops, informers, spies, “data mining” and more against working people. Capitalist politicians of all stripes are calling for barring Syrians from seeking refuge in the U.S. or to limit entrance to Syrian Christians. Anti-Arab and anti-Muslim bigotry is being promoted to justify gutting workers’ rights.

This in the face of the fact that the biggest victims of imperialist policy, of Syria and other bourgeois regimes in the region, and of reactionary Islamic State terror are Arabs, Muslims, Kurds and others there.

The Socialist Workers Party calls on workers, farmers and all defenders of democratic rights to protest these attacks and defend constitutional rights to speak out and protest against government policy — from wars abroad to cop violence at home.

There is growing resistance today to attacks by the bosses and their government, like the large picket lines put up by members of the autoworkers union on strike at Kohler in Wisconsin; steelworkers and others fighting deep concession demands; Black youth leading protests against police killings; and activities in support of demands for an

end to the criminal U.S. blockade of revolutionary Cuba. This resistance is Washington’s real target as it prepares for sharper battles to come.

The French rulers have imposed a far-reaching state of emergency, reinstituted French border controls, barred demonstrations, put army troops on the streets and stepped up spying in Arab and Muslim neighborhoods.

Islamic State, which has taken credit for the slaughter in Paris, as well as terror attacks against a Russian airliner in Egypt and dozens of workers and youth in Beirut over the last couple weeks, is a reactionary thug outfit.

Betrayals by Stalinist parties and bourgeois-minded nationalist misleaders have prevented toilers in the Middle East from developing a leadership like the July 26th Movement — which led workers and farmers in Cuba to power in 1959 — capable of organizing a revolutionary struggle against imperialist oppression and capitalists and landlords at home.

The U.S.-led decade-long imperialist war in Iraq propped up a brutal, factional regime that attacked and deepened suffering in Sunni areas.

The Bashar al-Assad dictatorship in Syria, backed by Moscow and Tehran, responded to mass mobilizations in 2011 calling for political rights and an end to the regime’s despotic rule with bombs, murder, torture and destruction, crushing the revolt.

In this political vacuum, the reactionary Islamic State emerged and seized territory, ruling by terror, beheadings and violence. The only force that has proved capable of pushing them back are the Kurds, motivated by decades-long aspirations for national rights and an independent Kurdish state. And their growing strength and confidence are viewed with fear and anger by the capitalist rulers in Iraq, Iran, Turkey and Syria, as well as by Washington.

The Socialist Workers Party demands Washington and Paris get out of the Middle East. We fight against the rulers’ attacks on our rights and political space to organize, challenge the assault of the bosses and take political action.

Striking unionists picket Kohler in Wisconsin

Continued from front page

to \$13 an hour.

Kohler rejected ending the two-tier setup. The bosses offered Tier A workers a 50 cents an hour raise each year in a three-year contract. Tier B workers would get an immediate raise averaging 20 percent, with 40-cent raises the next two years, leaving their wages below \$17 an hour.

The bosses’ proposal would raise health care costs again, supposedly offset by a \$1,200 signing bonus.

“Those guys are making \$11 an hour and less to do the same work we do,” said Glenn Billings, a Tier A worker, speaking about Tier B on the picket line. “It’s not right. That’s why 94 percent voted against the company’s proposal.”

Kohler has 32,000 employees worldwide and annual revenue close to \$6 billion. In addition to plumbing fixtures it produces engines, power generation systems and furniture, and manages golf clubs and resort hotels.

Local 833 represents about 2,100 workers at a plumbing-ware factory in Kohler and a generator plant north of Sheboygan. Some 1,800 unionists attended the meeting where the contract was

discussed and voted overwhelmingly in favor of a strike.

The union hall is abuzz, with people making picket signs, organizing a shuttle to and from the picket line, and doing other strike-related tasks. Tayloe said only six workers have crossed the picket line.

“Kohler claims we’re misleading people, but we’re not, they are,” he said. “They claim that they are raising the wages of workers in Tier B 20 percent, but the proposal really only applies to certain Tier B workers.

“People can’t live on those wages. One guy who’s walking the picket line with us is living in his car. We didn’t know about it before, but now we do and we’re getting him a place to stay.”

A county circuit court judge issued a temporary injunction Nov. 17 ordering strikers not to block traffic.

UAW members at the Big Three automakers — Fiat Chrysler, Ford and General Motors — also have been campaigning to end lower-paid categories of workers. The new four-year Chrysler contract projects eliminating the gap between the first and second tier over eight years, but worsens the terms for the third tier, temporary part-time workers.

Ford workers have begun voting on a similar contract. As of Nov. 18 just over half of those voting had rejected the deal.

UAW officials have postponed ratification of the GM contract, passed by 58 percent, to address the opposition of nearly 60 percent of skilled trade workers.

Maggie Trowe contributed to this article.

Brazil mine flood

Continued from front page

omy faces a sharp contraction and the government has been wracked by corruption scandals.

When the two Samarco dams broke, millions of tons of sludge that had piled up since 1977 rushed 270 miles into the mountain valleys below, covering everything in the way. Hundreds of residents have been evacuated, and water supplies for more than half a million people risk becoming contaminated.

Minas Gerais is the center of Brazil’s mining industry, a pillar in the economy. Samarco is the second biggest iron ore mining operation in the world and is jointly owned by Brazilian Vale, the world’s largest ore producer, and Anglo-Australian BHP Billiton. Local municipalities revolve around mining and up to 85 percent of their budgets depend on this industry. The area was already reeling from the global slump in ore prices, which are at their lowest level in a decade.

To offset falling prices, Samarco was ramping up production, which rose by almost 40 percent last year. Work was being done to expand the first dam when it burst. Thirteen mine workers are among those dead or missing. The company says the mine’s environmental licenses were up to date and the dams had been inspected in July.

“No operation of this size just breaks without warning,” Minas Gerais state prosecutor Carlos Eduardo Ferreira Pinto said after the disaster. A report ordered by his office before the company’s license was renewed in 2013 found the mine waste structures were unstable and prone to erosion. But the state went ahead with the renewal anyway.

Facing the prospect of paying hundreds of millions of dollars in damages, Vale and BHP insist that responsibility for the disaster lies solely with their subsidiary, Samarco. Stocks fell sharply for both companies following the burst.

Economic crisis, corruption scandals

Brazil’s economy expanded between 2002 and 2008 as exports of iron ore, oil and sugar boomed. But the main markets for these products in China, the U.S., Argentina and Europe are shrinking, and the country now faces its worst recession since the 1930s.

Working people bear the brunt of the contraction. The official unemployment rate that covers data only from the six biggest cites rose by more than 50 percent in the first nine months of this year to 7.6 percent. Inflation is nearly 10 percent, and higher for food, while Brazil’s currency, the real, has lost one-third of its value this year. Payments on the public debt were 25 percent higher in 2014 than the year before because of soaring interest rates.

To win re-election last year President Dilma Rousseff implemented a series of stimulus measures, price controls and tax breaks. But controls on fuel and energy prices are now being scrapped, with electricity rates scheduled to rise up to 30 percent this year.

Rousseff is now accused of manipulating budget accounts to hide the scope of the budget deficit. More than a dozen requests have been filed with Congress to impeach her for doctoring the figures for the past two years.

Fifty legislators from seven parties have also filed a motion to open a process to unseat Eduardo Cunha, head of the country’s lower house of Congress, for allegedly taking millions in bribes in a scheme of money-laundering and corruption in the state-owned oil firm Petrobras.

In March 2014, federal police arrested Paulo Roberto Costa, Petrobras’ former head of refining. In exchange for a lower sentence, Costa started talking. More than a year and half later ruling political and business figures continue to be drawn into the scandal.

Nestor Cervera, former international chief of Petrobras, was sentenced to 12 years in prison Aug. 17. More than two dozen executives from Brazil’s largest construction firms have been arrested for transferring money to slush funds for political parties. Most of the alleged bribe-takers belong to Rousseff’s Workers Party, which has governed the country since 2002.

On Oct. 2, the Supreme Court authorized the questioning of former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, also of the Workers Party. The court claims that the scheme started with Jose Dirceu, da Silva’s former chief of staff.

‘Militant’ Prisoners’ Fund

The Prisoners’ Fund makes it possible to send prisoners reduced rate subscriptions. To donate, send a check or money order payable to the Militant and earmarked “Prisoners’ Fund” to 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018.